

THE USE OF SELF ASSESSMENT IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING ENGLISH SKILL

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Abstract

This research aims at finding out The Use of Self-Assessment in Improving Writing English Skill of the Students at English Education Department of STAIN Watampone academic year 2013/2014. The specific objective of the research is to find out whether or not the use of self-assessment improves students' performance in writing English skill. The research method employed quasi experimental research. The samples consist of 40 students which belonged to two groups; experimental and control group. The research data were collected using two kinds of instruments: the writing test which was given to the both groups and questionnaires of learners' self assessment which was given only to the experimental group. The research result indicated that: the use of self-assessment in writing English skill is more effective in improving students' ability. The result of post test of both group improved, but the use of self assessment gave better effect than conventional way. It was proved by the result of the mean score of post test of experimental was higher than the control group in writing skill. It is suggested to the English teacher that the use of learners' self assessment as one of alternative strategy in teaching writing in order to improve students' writing ability. In addition the students can take responsibility for their own learning.

Keywords: *self assessment, writing skill*

Abstrak

Peneiltian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui penerapan penilaian mandiri dalam meningkatkan keterampilan menulis mahasiswa jurusan pendidikan Bahasa Inggris tahun Akademik 2013/2014. Metode penelitian ini menerapkan eksperimental semu. Sample terdiri atas 40 mahasiswa yang terdiri atas dua grup. Grup eksperimental dan grup kontrol. Data penelitian ini dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan dua instrumen. Yaitu tes menulis yang di berikan pada dua grup, dan angket mengenai penilaian mandiri yang hanya diberikan pada kelompok eksperimental. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan penilaian diri mandiri lebih efektif dalam memingkatkan kemampuan siswa. Hasil post tes dari kedua grup meningkat tetapi

penggunaan penilaian mandiri lebih baik dari cara konvensional. Dengan demikian guru bahasa Inggris dapat menggunakan penilaian mandiri dalam pembelajaran menulis untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa. Dan siswa dapat bertanggung jawab terhadap pembelajaran mereka sendiri.

Kata kunci: *penilaian mandiri, keterampilan menulis*

Introduction

Writing is a way of communicating message in written form to a reader for a purpose. Through writing, one can explain or describe things and as a result people miles from us can get information by reading the writer message.

Among the four language skills, writing seems to be the most difficult to master. This is due to the fact that, as a productive skill, writing requires mastery for several components, such as grammar and content. Therefore, the idea or the message as the content of the writing should be presented as clear as possible. As a skill, writing cannot be mastered at once but it needs a lot of practice.

Writing practices in the classroom are required to give opportunities to the learners to develop their ability in expressing themselves in an appropriate way. They have the chance to improve their writing since they can correct their work after being checked by the teacher.

More practice will enrich the writer's knowledge and improve his skill in using English in its written form. In line with this, Barnett and Stubb define writing as a physical act, which requires materials and energy. To be performed skillfully, to bring pleasure to both performer and audience, it requires practice. The writing practice is given in the form of various exercises, done hierarchically from the easiest to the more difficult tasks. Byrne gives the procedures to be taken in the writing practice namely; searching for ideas, taking notes, outlining, drafting and revising (Sylvan & Marcia 1997:102).

Beside doing more practice in developing the writing text, the teacher can facilitate the students in doing their own assessment. Language learning and assessment are closely associated and often intertwined in practice, classroom assessment practices are consequently also of importance in realizing these goals. The trend to find alternative forms of assessment to increase the validity and reliability of assessments, as well as to increase formative aspects of learning, the

alternatives of self-and peer assessment are not what students and teachers are accustomed to at any level.

Assessment for learning directly influences student learning by reinforcing the connections between assessment and instruction. Assessment for learning occurs as apart of everyday teaching and learning and uses information from ongoing assessment to shape classroom teaching and learning. assessment as learning puts the students in an active role as learners, using assessment information to self assess, regulate, and monitor their learning progress. Effective assessment practices are responsive to the strength, needs, and clearly articulated learning destinations of the students.

Many educators have come to recognize that alternative assessments are an important means of gaining a dynamic picture of students' academic and linguistic development. Alternative assessment refers to procedures and techniques which can be used within the context of instruction and can be easily incorporated into the daily activities of the school or classroom. It is particularly useful with English as second language students because it employs strategies that task students to show what they can do. In contrast to traditional testing, in alternative-assessment students are evaluated on what they integrate and produce rather than on what they are able to recall and reproduce (Huerta-Macias, 1995:10).

Self-assessment practices are considered an essential component of alternative assessment. A number of formative motives for self-assessment practices have been suggested by Oscarson (1989). Among others these are that self-assessment promotes learning, raises learner awareness, improves goal orientation, improves learner autonomy in a lifelong perspective, is conducive to democratic learning processes and needs analysis.

Students need to know what their abilities are, how much progress they are making and what they can (or cannot yet) do with the skills they have acquired. Without such knowledge, it would not be easy for them to learn efficiently. In the process of learning writing, the students are able to assess the strength or the weakness of their writing through self assessment.

In line with the theories of learner autonomy, self-assessment is currently

playing an important role in language teaching. The procedure involves students in judging their own learning, particularly their achievement and learning outcomes. Many have argued that teachers should help students to construct knowledge through active involvement in assessing their own learning performance, and that students are empowered by gaining ownership of their learning and life-long learning skills (Chen, 2008:30).

Teachers should provide opportunities for students to assess their language level to help them focus on their own learning. Hunt, Gow, and Barnes (1989) argue that without learner self-evaluation and self-assessment “there can be no real autonomy. Blue identifies some benefits of self-assessment such as encouraging greater effort, boosting self-confidence, and facilitating awareness of distinctions between competence and performance as well as self-awareness of learning strengths and weaknesses. One of the most important functions of self-assessment techniques as seen by Black and Wiliam and Oscarson is that of giving individual learners continuous feedback on what they have learnt.

The researcher formulated research question is addressed: Does learners’ self-assessment of learning process significantly improve the ability of the learners’ writing skill?

The researcher limited the scope of the research on the use of learners’ self assessment in writing English at English Education Department of STAIN Watampone, especially writing of the fifth semester students in Academic Year 2013/2014. By discipline, the research is under applied linguistics. By content, the research covered writing skill of the students. By activity, the research employed self assessment in improving the ability of the students’ writing skill.

Method

In this research, the researcher applied quasi experimental method using two groups’ pretest-posttest design. The experiment involved two groups, an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received a new treatment (self assessment), a treatment under investigation, while the control group received a different treatment namely conventional way.

Sample

The population of this research was the fifth semester students' at English Education Department of STAIN Watampone in academic year 2013/2014. The population divided into four class, class A consist of 21 students, class B consists of 18 students, class C consists of 21 students, and class D consists of 21 students. The total number of population is 81 students.

The samples were selected based on purposive sampling. The researcher took two classes, class for experimental group and class for controlled group. Class C was took as experimental group and class D was took as controlled group. As a consideration, the students of both classes have the same ability. Besides the students also have the same background knowledge in learning English. The researcher took 20 students for each class by the reason some students were not active.

Instrument

1. Writing test

The test consists of pretest and posttest. The instrument is intended to measure the students' achievement of language skill particularly writing skill. Writing test is intended for testing students to find out their achievement on writing skill. The test is used as pretest and posttest by using subjective test, free composition. It consists of only one item.

2. Questionnaire

The questionnaires used in this research consisted of two kinds instruments. The first was a self assessment questionnaire of students' writing and the second was a self assessment questionnaire related to the students' performance in writing English. The questionnaires were given to students in each treatment after the learning process done. It was conducted to find out the students' self evaluation after getting the material from teacher. It could be also as evaluation and consideration for the teacher to the next treatment.

Analysis

To assess the achievement of the students' writing score data were analyzed by adapting to the scoring rubric of J.B.Heaton. In addition, in analyzing the writing test result, the researcher used percentage technique. The use of

percentage technique is to know the percentage of the students' writing achievement through the use of learners self assessment method; and conventional method. To find out mean score, standard deviation and t-test pre-test and post-test the researcher used SPSS 15.0 program.

Finding

The result of the students' pretest score gained through the application of learners' self assessment method and a conventional way. It can be seen in a table as follows:

Table 1. Mean score and Standard Deviation of students' pretest

Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
Experimental	77.80	6.81
Control	76.80	8.10

Table 1. shows that the mean score of students' pretest of experimental group is 77.80 which is categorized as good classification and control group is 76.80 which is categorized as good classification. Based on the table above shown, we concluded that the students' mean score of experimental group was statistically different with control group. It is assumed that the difference between close score is essentially the same so the students mean score between experimental and control was relatively the same. Those experimental and control group had the same or relatively the same baseline ability in writing skill before treatment.

In order to find the significant different, the researcher applied t-test formula to analyze whether or not it was statistically significant. In this case, the pretest score was analyzed at level significant .05 by using SPSS version 15.0.

Table 2. t test of students' pretest

Variable	Probability Value	Asymptotic significant
Pre-test	0.5	0.818

Based on the statistics test in asymptotic significant (2-tailed) column, in relation to the data of pretest, the .818 was greater than .05. It means that there was not significant between the students' writing both experimental group and control group before treatment.

After knowing that there was no significant difference between the students' writing ability of the two groups, is indicated that they have the same productivity before they are given treatments.

After the treatment, the students in both groups were posttest to find out their writing skill at the same level or not by using t-test analyzed with SPSS 15.0. The results of posttest are presented in table 3 below:

Table 3. The mean score and standard deviation of students' posttest

Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
Experimental	86.80	11.13
Control	77.25	6.01

The table above shows that the mean scores of both groups were different after the treatment. The mean score of experimental group was 86.80 which was categorized as excellent category and control group was 77.25, which was categorized was good category ($86.80 > 77.25$) and the standard deviation was 11.13 of experimental group and standard deviation of control group is 6.01.

To know the students' means score of posttest was difference, the research should decide whether or not it was statistically significant. In order to answer such question, the researcher applied t-test analyses by using SPSS version 15.0.

Table 4. The t-test of the students' posttest

Variable	Probability Value	Asymptotic significant
Post-test	0.5	0.009

The data of post-test indicate that the statistical hypothesis is based on statistics test in *asympt. Sig* (2-tailed), we concluded that the probability is smaller than .05 or $.009 < .05$. This means that H_1 was acceptable and, of course, the statistical hypothesis of H_0 was rejected, it was means that learners' self assessment method was able to give significantly greater contribution than conventional one.

Discussion

The mean score of pre-test of experimental group were 77.45 and means score of control group were 76.80. This data showed that both group have different score, but after analyzing by using t-test formula, the result showed that

the difference were not significant. It means that both group had the same ability in writing before conducting the treatment.

The score of students of posttest showed improvement. It can be seen on student means score. The mean score of control was 77.25 while experimental group was 86.80. It showed that both group had different score. It can be proved by using t-test to find out the significant. And the result showed that the means score of both group was significantly different after conducting treatment. The students' score of experimental was higher than score of control group. It means that the using of self assessment in teaching writing gave better effect than conventional way.

The mean scores of the experimental and the control group increased after they were given treatments. The experimental group learnt to write English by using self assessment while the control group learnt to write English by using the conventional way. The improvement of students' writing skill is marked by the results of the post-test occurring in the both experimental and control group. However, the improvement rate of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group.

As stated by Abbot in Anas (2008:5) that choosing appropriate teaching methods become evidence so that students will learn effectively when the material presented to them. The choice of teaching learning method must be considered by teacher in getting the teaching goals that have been formulated. In line to Sedikides suggests that the self-assessment will prompt learner to seek information to confirm their uncertain self-concept rather than their certain self-concept and at the same time people use self-assessment to enhance their certainty of their own self-knowledge (Sedikides, 2013).

Self assessment is the best way to promote understanding and learning, supporting the belief that students who feel ownership for the task become more engaged in their own learning process. In addition, self-assessment is an important element that can help learners become more active, locate their own strengths and weaknesses and realize that they have the responsibility for learning. By encouraging individual reflection, self-assessment can begin to make students see their learning in personal terms and can help learners get better marks. Besides,

self assessment allows students to look at their knowledge of the language at various points during a course. Self-assessment motivates students to look at their strengths and weaknesses and become more autonomous learners which is a fundamental part of the learning process.

A self assessment aims to help a person identify his own areas of strengths and weakness to create an action plan for implementing change. When students are able to analyze their own progress, they can find ways, methods or strategies to make improvements and be better students and learners. In sum up, the application of self assessment gave better effect than conventional way in teaching writing skill to the students of English education department.

Conclusion

The use of learners' self assessment in improving students' ability in writing at English Education Department of STAIN Watampone was better than the conventional way. It was proved by the analysis of test that showed the posttest is greater than pretest ($X_{\text{posttest}} = 86.80 > X_{\text{pretest}} = 77.25$). It can be also seen through the result of table paired sample ($0.009 > 0.05$). This output indicates that there is a significant difference between pretest and posttest of experimental group. It means that the use of self assessment in teaching writing skill significantly greater contribution than the use of conventional way. It is positively stated that the use of self assessment in teaching writing skill develops students' writing skill and more productive better than the use of conventional way.

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